

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An electronic device network system comprising:  
an electronic device for transmitting data via a network;

a plurality of storing means for storing data transmitted from the electronic device; and

a plurality of external devices for acquiring data from the storing means and processing the acquired data,

the network connecting the electronic device, the storing means, and the external devices to one another,

wherein the electronic device, at least one of the plurality of storing means, and at least one of the external devices each have a security function.

2. The electronic device network system as set forth in claim 1, wherein:

the plurality of storing means includes a first storing means having a higher security level, and a second storing means having a lower security level,

the electronic device includes a setting section for enabling a user to set a security level for transmitted data, and

the electronic device network system further comprises a search means for searching for a storing means according to the security level set in the setting

section, so that the transmitted data is received by the storing means so searched.

3. The electronic device network system as set forth in claim 2, wherein the first storing means transmits data by encrypting the data, and the second storing means transmits data without encrypting the data.

4. The electronic device network system as set forth in claim 2, wherein the first storing means is connected to the Internet via a firewall that limits access from devices on the Internet, and the second storing means is connected to the Internet without the firewall.

5. The electronic device network system as set forth in claim 2, wherein the first storing means does not have access to the Internet, and the second storing means have access to the Internet.

6. The electronic device network system as set forth in claim 1, wherein the electronic device, at least one of the plurality of storing means, and at least one of the external devices each have a communications function for encrypted data.

7. The electronic device network system as set forth in claim 1, further comprising search means for searching for an electronic device, a storing means, and an external device according to security levels of the respective security functions of the electronic device, at least one of the plurality of storing means, and at least one of the plurality of external devices.

8. The electronic device network system as set forth in claim 1, further comprising search means for searching for an external device according to locations or functions of the external devices.

9. The electronic device network system as set forth in claim 7, wherein the search means searches for a transmission route of the transmitted data from the electronic device to the storing means or the external devices.

10. The electronic device network system as set forth in claim 8, wherein the search means searches for a transmission route of the transmitted data from the electronic device to the storing means or the external devices.

11. The electronic device network system as set forth in claim 1, wherein the external devices each include a search section for searching for a storing means whose security level matches a security level of an external device making the search.

12. The electronic device network system as set forth in claim 1, wherein the electronic device includes a displaying means for displaying a result of search made by a search means according to search conditions.

13. The electronic device network system as set forth in claim 1, wherein the respective security functions of the electronic device, at least one of the plurality of storing means, and at least one of the plurality of external devices are rendered depending on whether the electronic device, the storing means, and the external devices belong to which of a plurality of networks that are connected to one another via access control means.

14. The electronic device network system as set forth in claim 1, wherein each of the external devices comprises an image forming device.

15. The electronic device network system as set forth

in claim 1, wherein the electronic device comprises a scanner.

16. The electronic device network system as set forth in claim 14, wherein the electronic device comprises a scanner.

17. A data receiver search system comprising:

a plurality of storing means with different security levels for storing data;

a plurality of external devices for acquiring data from the storing means and processing the acquired data;

an electronic device connected to the storing means and the external devices via a network; and

a search device, connected to the electronic device, for searching for a storing means that satisfies a predetermined condition,

the electronic device including:

a transmission section for transmitting data to the storing means; and

a setting section for enabling a user to set a security level for transmitted data,

the search device including a search section for searching for a storing means according to the security level set in the setting section, so that the transmitted

data is received by the storing means so searched.

18. A data receiver search method using an electronic device network system that comprises:

an electronic device for transmitting data via a network;

a plurality of storing means for storing data transmitted from the electronic device; and

a plurality of external devices for acquiring data from the storing means and processing the acquired data,

the network connecting the electronic device, the storing means, and the external devices to one another, and

the electronic device, at least one of the plurality of storing means, and at least one of the external devices each having a security function,

said method searching for a storing means and an external device whose respective security functions match a security level set by a user, when the electronic device transmits data.

19. The data receiver search method as set forth in claim 18, wherein the search for an external device is made according to a location or functions of the external device.

20. The data receiver search method as set forth in claim 18, wherein the method searches for a transmission route of the transmitted data from the electronic device to the storing means or the external devices.

21. The data receiver search method as set forth in claim 18, wherein the method prohibits transmission of data to the electronic device, the storing means, and the external devices when the respective security levels of the electronic device, the storing means, and the external devices do not match the security level set by the user.

22. The data receiver search method as set forth in claim 21, wherein:

when stored data in a storing means needs to be outputted from an external device but an external device and a storing means storing necessary data have different security levels so that the data is prevented from being transmitted from the storing means to the external device,

the search means searches for an external device whose security level matches the security level of the storing means storing the necessary data.